RESPONSE ON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE RULING OF CELEBRATING THE BIRTHDAY OF THE PROPHET,

MAY ALLAAH EXALT HIS MENTION

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Introduction

All perfect praise be to Allaah[1] , and may Allaah exalt the mention of His Messenger and Slave Muhammad[2] , as well as that of his family and all his companions, may Allaah be pleased with them.

This is a medium response to one Yemenite Sufi whose name is Al-Habeeb Ibn 'Ali Al-Jafri. In his most recent tape entitled ''The Objectives of a Female Believer and Her Example in Life'', he mentioned that the celebration of the Prophet's, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, birthday is permissible. He provided evidence from the Quran[3] and the Sunnah[4] (of the Prophet, sallalaahu 'alayhi wa salam) -as he claims- and he confused the ordinary listener with this evidence.

I ask Allaah to benefit with this response whoever has a heart or who listens while he is present [in mind], and may Allaah exalt the mention of His Messenger and Slave Muhammad as well as that of his family and all his companions, and whoever treads his path, and follows his Sunnah until the Day of Resurrection, and all perfect praise be to Allaah.

..Written by he who seeks Allaah's Forgiveness, 'Aadil Ibn 'Ali Ibn Ahmad Al-Fareedaan; may Allaah forgive him, his parents and all the Muslims, Aameen!

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[1] Allaah: This is the correct translation of the word in a way that even a non Arabic speaker who does not know Arabic would read it exactly in the same manner as an Arab native speaker.

[2] Hereafter referred to as sallallaahu 'alayhi wa salam for 2 reasons: a) to teach the non-Arabs to pronounce this exaltation in a correct way. b) to get a reward every time one reads it.

[3] The correct transliteration is Qur'an, however, if you search this word in the World Wide Website with this spelling, you will not find any match.

[4] Sunnah: Whatever the Prophet did, said or approved of.

In the Name of Allaah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

All perfect praise be to Allaah, we praise Him, we seek His Help and His Forgiveness, and we seek refuge in Him from the evil of our own selves and from our sinful deeds, and I testify that there is none worthy of worship except Allaah, He is the One and He has no partners or associates, and I testify that Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger.

{O you who believe! Fear Allaah (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. (Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always), and die not except in a state of Islam (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allaah.} [Quran 3:102]

{O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Aadam), and from him (Aadam) He created his wife (Hawwaa' (Eve)), and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allaah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allaah is Ever an All-Watcher over you.}[Quran 4:1]

{O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allaah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allaah and His Messenger, he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and made to enter Paradise).}[Quran 33:70-71]

To proceed: the best speech is the Word of Allaah, and the best guidance is that of Muhammad, sallalaahu 'alayhi wa salam, and the worst matters are the newly invented ones (in religion), and every newly invented matter is an innovation, and every innovation is a misguidance and every misguidance is in Hellfire."

Allaah has perfected the religion for us, completed His favor upon us and has approved for us Islam as religion, and he ordered us to hold fast to the Quran until the day we die.

Allaah Says (what means): {O you who believe! Fear Allaah (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. (Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always), and die not except in a state of Islam (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allaah.} [Quran 3:102].

Allaah further says (what means): {And this (submission to Allaah, Islam) was enjoined by Ibraheem (Abraham) upon his sons and by Ya'qoob (Jacob), (saying), "O my sons! Allaah has chosen for you the (true) religion, then die not except in the Faith of Islam (as Muslims - Islamic Monotheism).}[Quran 2: 132].

In addition to this, Allaah clarified the purpose for which He created mankind and jinn, as He says (what means): **{And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.} [Quran 51:56].**

Indeed, the purpose for which mankind and jinn were created is an honor and happiness for them in this worldly life and in the Hereafter. They are the ones who will benefit from this worship, and whoever refuses to worship Allaah, he is an arrogant person, and whoever worships Allaah and associates with Him other deities, he is a polytheist, and whoever worships Allaah with something which Allaah has not legislated, he is an innovator, and the person who worships Allaah Alone with what He revealed, he is the only one who is a true believer in the Oneness of Allaah.

Since Allaah's Servants [mankind and jinn] are in necessity to worship Allaah, the Exalted, and they are not able to know by themselves the reality of this worship which should please Him and which should correspond to His Religion, then Allaah, did not leave them without help, rather, He sent Messengers to them and revealed to them Books in order to clarity the reality of this worship. Allaah Says (what means):

{And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allaah (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Taghut (all false deities i.e. do not worship Taghut besides Allaah).} [Quran 16:36].

Allaah further says:

{And We did not send any Messenger before you, O Muhammad [Sallallaahu 'alayhi wa salam] but We inspired him (saying): Laa ilaaha illaa Anaa [none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allaah)], so worship Me (Alone and none else).} [Quran 21:25].

Therefore, whoever abandons and strays away from the worship which the Messengers, may Allaah exalt their mention, clarified, and which was revealed in the Books, and he worshipped Allaah according to his desires and according to the lures of the devil among the humans and jinn, then he has indeed strayed from the Path of Allaah and he is not in reality worshipping Allaah, rather, he is worshipping his desires; Allaah Says (what means): **{And who**

is more astray than one who follows his desire without guidance from Allaah?} [Quran 28:50].

The people who follow their desires are so many, and on top of them are the Christians and whose who have gone astray from this nation [Muslims], like the Sufis as they planned to worship Allaah in a way which contradicts what Allaah legislated on the tongue of his Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, …This will become crystal clear by clarifying the reality of worship which Allaah ordained, and the reality upon which the Sufis are today as they deviated from the reality of that worship.

The worship which Allaah legislated is based on firm principles and foundations, and this could be summarized in the following:

THE PRINCIPLES OF TRUE WORSHIP:

First: It is Tawqifiyah, which means that there is no place for opinion in it, but its legislator is Allaah, as Allaah Says to his Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, (what means):

{So remain on a right course as you have been commanded, [you] and those who have repented with you [to Allaah], and do not transgress.} [Quran 11:112].

Allaah also says (what means):

{Then We put you, [O Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam], on an ordained way concerning the matter [of religion]; so follow it and do not follow the inclinations of those who do not know.} [Quran 45:18].

Moreover, Allaah ordained his Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, to say (what means):

{I only follow that which is revealed to me.} [Quran 46:9].

Second: Acts of worship should be purely and sincerely devoted to Allaah and free from all kinds of Shirk (i.e. associating partners to Allaah), as Allaah Says (what means):

{So whoever would hope for the meeting with his Lord (i.e. Allaah), let him do righteous deeds and not associate in the worship of his Lord anyone.} [Quran 18:110].

That is because if the worship is associated with any Shirk, Allaah will invalidate it, as He says (what means):

{But if they had associated others with Allaah, then worthless for them would be whatever they were doing.} [Quran 6:88].

Allaah further says (what means):

{And it was already revealed to you and to those before you that if you should associate [anything] with Allaah, your work would surely become worthless, and you would surely be among the losers. Rather, worship [only] Allaah and be among the grateful.} [Quran 39: 65-66].

Third: The example who should be followed in acts of worship and the one who should have clarified them should be the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, as Allaah Says (what means):

{Indeed, in the Messenger of Allaah [Mohammad, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam] you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for the meeting with Allaah and the Last Day, and [who] remembers Allaah much.} [Quran 33:21].

Allaah also says (what means):

{And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from.} [Quran 59:7].

Furthermore, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *"Whoever introduces an act that is not in accordance with ours (concerning religion), it will be rejected."* Another narration reads: *"Whoever introduces into this matter of ours [Islam] that which is not a part of it, it will be rejected."*

The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, also said: *''Pray [perform the prayer] as you see me praying.''* He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, further said: *''Take from me your rituals [of Hajj and 'Umrah].''* There are many other verses and Prophetic narrations in this regard.

Fourth: Acts of worship are restricted by time and proportion which one is not permitted to exceed. For instance, Allaah Says about the prayer (what means):

{Indeed, the prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times.} [Quran 4:103];

And about Hajj; Allaah Says (what means):

{The Hajj is [during] well-known months.} [Quran 2:197];

And about fasting, Allaah Says (what means):

{The month of Ramadhan [is that] in which the Quran was revealed, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion. So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it.} [Quran 2:185].

Fifth: Acts of worship must be based on the love of Allaah and submission to Him, and fear [of His Punishment] and hope [for His Mercy], Allaah Says (what means):

{Those whom they invoke seek means of access to their Lord, [striving as to] which of them would be nearest, and they hope for His Mercy and fear His Punishment.} [Quran 17:57].

Furthermore, Allaah Says about his Prophets, may Allaah exalt their mention, (what means):

{Indeed, they used to hasten to good deeds and supplicate Us in hope and fear, and they were to Us humbly submissive.} [Quran 21:90].

In another verse, Allaah Says (what means):

{Say, [O Muhammad], "If you should love Allaah, then follow me, [so] Allaah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allaah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. "Say, "Obey Allaah and the Messenger", but if they turn away, then indeed, Allaah does not like the disbelievers.} [Quran 3:31-32].

In the above verses, Allaah mentions the signs and the fruits for His Love, the most important of which is following and obeying the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and obeying Allaah; as

regards its fruits, it is that Allaah will love us, forgive our sins and have mercy upon us.

Sixth: A pubescent is not exempted from the acts of worship as soon as he becomes pubescent until his death, as long as he is in a sound mind. Allaah Says (what means):

{And worship your Lord until there comes to you the certainty [i.e., death].} [Quran 15:99].

The above six matters are the conditions of a correct and acceptable worship which Allaah legislated, and He ordered His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, to convey it to all the people. As regards the reality of Sufism and their deviations from the true worship today, then it takes a long time to discuss this matter and this is not the place. Indeed, large books refuted their arguments and disclosed their deviation from the correct path.

However, what we are going to do here is to discuss some points with the named Al-Habeeb 'Ali Al-Jafri (who is a Sufi person) who has spoken about the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, in an audio tape entitled, ''The Objectives of a Female Believer and Her Example in Life'', whereby he mentioned many matters about the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. At the end of the tape he mentioned that celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and all what takes place in this celebration is a confirmed act (i.e. Sunnah) but not an innovation. He provided many matters as evidence, and we will mention them, Allaah willing.

I will mention his statements exactly as he uttered them and I will discuss each matter while clarifying that his view is rejected and unfounded. In doing so, I will first seek Allaah's Help, Who has no partners nor associates, and then provide evidence from the Quran, from the authentic and noble Prophetic narrations, and from the consensus of the scholars, may Allaah have mercy upon them,[1] among the Salaf (righteous predecessors) of this Muslim nation, i.e. the companions and the two generations which followed them, and those who followed them exactly in faith among the outstanding scholars.

I ask Allaah by His Beautiful Names and Attributes to show us the truth exactly as it is, bless us by following it[2] and not make it ambiguous to us lest we would go astray, and not put in our hearts

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[1] Whenever a name of a scholar and the like is mentioned, may Allaah have mercy upon him, is written as a sign of respect to him even if it is not written in the original text.

[2] There is a mistake in the Arabic text [page 5], as it should read: و يرزقنا إتباعه but not و يرزقنا إجتنابه

[any] resentment towards those who have believed, indeed, Allaah is All-Kind and All-Merciful.

Al-Jafri said: ''The birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is one of his Sunan (confirmed acts), and it is a confirmed Sunnah, we would not only say that (celebrating) it is a permissible act, rather it is a confirmed Sunnah.''

Answer: The Sunnah is whatever the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, confirmed, or whatever his caliphs confirmed as he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ''Hold fast to my Sunnah and that of the rightly guided caliphs…'' The rightly guided caliphs were Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmaan and 'Ali, may Allaah be pleased with them. Anything else other than this is among the newly invented matters about which the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, warned us against and informed us that they are evil and a misguidance.

Among these newly invented matters is the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, did not order us to celebrate it. He neither celebrated it himself, nor did he order any rightly guided caliph to do so. In addition to this, neither the companions nor the two generations which followed them exactly in faith celebrated it. Therefore, celebrating his birthday is an innovation and a misguidance and it must be rejected, as the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "Whoever introduces an act that is not in accordance with ours (concerning religion), it will be rejected.", which means that it will be refused and not accepted from its doer. Ibn Habeeb reporting from Ibn Al-Majishoon, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: ''I heard Imaam Maalik, may Allaah have mercy upon him, saying: ''Whoever innovates in Islam an innovation which he considers to be good, then he is claiming that Mohammad, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, betrayed the Message, as Allaah Says (what means):

{This day, I have perfected for you your religion.} [Quran 5:3];

whatever was not religion then, it will not be religion today.''

Saying that celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is a confirmed Sunnah involves three bad requisites:

Celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, should be the religion which Allaah completed and perfected upon us, and this is something which is proven by absolute evidence that it is rejected. That is because Allaah did not order His Slaves and His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, to celebrate the

birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, himself did not celebrate it.

Neither the rightly guided caliphs, nor the companions, nor the two generations which followed them exactly in faith celebrated it. Moreover, it was not known among the Muslims for nearly 600 years until it was innovated by Sultan Irbil, and then he became well known (due to this innovation).

Therefore, whoever claims that celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is part of religion, he has indeed attributed something to Allaah and to His Book and to His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, without knowledge. Allaah Says (what means):

{Say, "My Lord has only forbidden immoralities - what is apparent of them and what is concealed - and sin, and oppression without right, and that you associate with Allaah that for which He has not sent down authority, and that you say about Allaah that which you do not know.} [Quran 7:33].

Moreover, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *''Whoever deliberately tells a lie about me, let him enjoy his place in Hellfire.''*

Among the bad requisites also, is that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and his companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, would have abandoned acting on a confirmed Sunnah; and the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and his companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, are far above this description.

Among the bad requisites also is that the people who celebrate the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, would have acted according to a confirmed act [Sunnah] which neither the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, nor his companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, did; this is something that no person who has the least sound reasoning or religion would say.

It is crystal clear from the statements of Al-Jafri that he does not know the religious texts of the scholars, may Allaah have mercy upon them, so he is saying that which he does not know. For instance, he says that the celebration of the Prophet's, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, birthday is a confirmed act [Sunnah], whereas the term Sunnah in the terminology of the scholars, may Allaah have mercy upon them, is that which the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, did on a regular basis. Are Al-Jafri and the people like him saying that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, used to celebrate his birthday?

Al-Jafri said: ''What is celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam? It is only rejoicing for Allaah and His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. And what is the ruling on rejoicing for Allaah and His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam? Allaah Says (what means): {Say, “In the bounty of Allaah and in His mercy — in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate.} [Quran 10:58]. Therefore, Allaah ordered us to rejoice, and the interpreters of the Quran, may Allaah have mercy upon them, stated the superiority of Allaah and the superiority of His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam.''

Answer: 1- Al-Jafri, interpreted the verse in a way which the Salaf (the righteous predecessors) did not interpret the Words of Allaah with. Rather, the verse should be interpreted like it was interpreted by the outstanding scholars. Ibn Katheer, May Allaah have mercy upon him, in his interpretation of the above verse, said: ''The guidance and true religion came from Allaah, so let them rejoice for this, as this is the most important thing which they must rejoice for.'' The interpretation of the Salaf did not include the meaning which is interpreted by Al-Jafri.''

Allaah did not order His Slaves to specify the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, with rejoicing and celebration, but He, ordered them to rejoice the guidance and true religion which He revealed upon His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. What proves this is the saying of Allaah which came before the above verse; Allaah Says (what means):

{O mankind, there has come to you instruction from your Lord and healing for what is in the breasts and guidance and mercy for the believers.} [Quran 10:57]

And then HE Says (what means):

{In the bounty of Allaah and in His Mercy — in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate.} [Quran 10:58].

The Bounty of Allaah is the religion of Islam and His Mercy is the Quran, and it was also interpreted that the Bounty of Allaah is the Quran and His Mercy is the religion of Islam. Anyway, both characteristics are from the rejoicing of Allaah and His Mercy; this is how Ibn 'Abas, Abu Sa'eed Al-khudri, Zayd Ibn Aslam, Ath-thahhaak, Mujaahid and Qutaadah, may Allaah be pleased with them, interpreted it.

The mercy on the people was not achieved by the birth, of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, but rather when he was commissioned as a Prophet to them. Allaah Says (what means):

''And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam], except as a mercy to the worlds.} [Quran 21:107].

The verse did not mention his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, birthday.

Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *''I was not sent as a curser, rather I was sent as a mercy.'' [Muslim].* Moreover, Salmaan, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, delivered a speech and said: *''O Allaah, any man from my nation whom I insulted or cursed when I was angry - as I am a human who gets angry like all other people - but I am sent as a mercy to the worlds- make it for them a supplication on the Day of Resurrection.'' [Ahmad and Abu Daawood].*

Al-Jafri said: ''Celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is something which is reported by Imaam Muslim, may Allaah have mercy upon him, that when the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, was asked: ''What would you say about a person who fasts on Mondays? He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, answered: ''It was the day I was born.'' So, listen [to me] before you hear the words of coddled people who prove that celebrating the fasting is not among celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam.''

Answer: 1- First of all, the wording of the narration is as follows: Abu Qutaadah Al-Ansaari, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam was asked about fasting on Mondays, and he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, replied: *''It was the day I was born, and the day on which the Quran was revealed to me.''*

If it is said that the purpose of celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is to thank Allaah and be grateful to Him about the bounty of the birth of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, on this day, then it is more logic –and this is also what is reported – that being grateful to Allaah should be similar to what the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, thanked Allaah for, which is by fasting. Therefore, we should fast on this day [Monday], as he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, used to fast on this day, and if we were asked why we are fasting on this day, our answer will be that it is the day on which the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, was born, and we fast on this day as a sign of being grateful to Allaah for it.

However, the people who celebrate the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, do not fast on this day. Fasting on this day is acting against one's desires by preventing them from the pleasure of food and drink, but these people do not

want that. So the two purposes [for them] contradict each other and they favoured what they like upon what Allaah likes.
It is known that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, was not used to fast on his birthday, which is the 12th of Rabee' Al-Awal -if this is confirmed- rather he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, used to fast on Mondays [of every week] which comes four times [or more] per month. Based on the above, to specify the 12th of Rabee' Al-Awal with a particular act of worship without specifying the same for every Monday of the week is considered as legislating rules which Allaah did not legislate and correcting His Act, and this is indeed a very evil act to do; we seek refuge of Allaah from doing this.

Was the Prophet's, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, fasting on Mondays as a sign of gratitude to Allaah's Bounty for commissioning him as a Prophet and a warner and a giver of glad tidings, in addition to fasting as a celebration, like the celebration of the people who celebrate the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, by gathering, saying a prose on him, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, in addition to music, food and drink? The answer is no.

Rather, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, did not do any of the above but he only fasted. Therefore, was what the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, did not enough and sufficient for the Muslim nation? Can any person with a sound reasoning say 'no'? Then, why legislate in religion and bring new laws which Allaah did not legislate? Allaah Says (what means):

{And whatever the Messenger has given you — take; and what he has forbidden you — refrain from. And fear Allaah; indeed, Allaah is severe in penalty.} [Quran 59:7].

Allaah also Says (what means): **{O you who have believed, do not put [yourselves] before Allaah and His Messenger but fear Allaah. Indeed, Allaah is Hearing and Knowing.} [Quran 49:1].**

Furthermore, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *''Beware the newly invented matters (in religion), as every newly invented matter is an innovation, and every innovation is a misguidance."* In addition to this, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *''Allaah prescribed upon you some (religious) obligations, so do not spoil them [you should fulfil them], and He set some limits, so do not violate them, and He forbade you from some things, unless you do them out of forgetfulness, so do not burden yourself with them, as this is a mercy from Allaah, so accept it.'' [Ad-Daaraqutni].*

Al-Jafri said: ''Behold, the idea of celebrating the birthday of Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is an issue which has two parts: The First Part is the idea of whether or not it is permissible to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam,

and is this something good in religion? The Second Part is the way this celebration is done. First of all, celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is a legitimate idea as the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ''It is the day I was born.'' It is not only us who celebrate this day, all the creatures celebrate it.''

Answer: I have already answered this argumentation and clarified that it is wrong, so there is no need to repeat it again.

Al-Jafri also said: ''The ignorant people who cannot see say that there is no distinguishing feature for the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, rather the distinguishing feature is when he was commissioned as a Prophet. These people do not understand anything about Allaah. I say to them: Was the kingdom of Rome destroyed on the night he was born or on the night he was commissioned as a Prophet? The fire which was extinguished and which was worshipped beside Allaah, was it extinguished on the day he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, was born or on the day he was commissioned as a Prophet? The idols which were destroyed, were they destroyed on the day he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, was born or on the day he was commissioned as a Prophet? All the creatures in this universe were shaken when he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, was born.''

Answer: Some scholars, may Allaah have mercy upon them, among whom is Ibn Katheer, in his book Al-Bidaayah wannihaayah, stated the same thing as Al-Jafri. But the occurrence of these things is not evidence at all about the permissibility of celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, as there is no correlation between the two events. The question which should also be asked is: ''Were the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and his companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, aware about what happened in his birthday or not? If they were aware about what happened – and I do not think that Al-Jafri would say otherwise- then why is it that they did not celebrate his birthday which is an innovation and which Al-Jafri and his followers do? Was, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, not aware about the excellence which originated thereof [due to his birthday] or would it be said that his companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, did not know the status of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and did not celebrate his birthday as a way of honouring him? The claim of Al-Jafri that there is a correlation between his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, birthday and the change of some universal features and earthly incidents, and then concluding by this, that it is permissible to celebrate his birthday, then this argumentation is not acceptable at all.

Al-Jafri said: ''After this, has this nation reached the point of deterioration and usefulness in mistreating the Prophet, sallallaahu

'alayhi wa sallam, to a point to ask a question whether or not he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, deserves that we rejoice with his birthday? What is this status of religiousness which the nation has reached? This is the status of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, in this world to see whether or not he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, deserves that we rejoice his birthday? What is this?

Answer: Al-Jafri -may Allaah guide him- wants us to legislate laws which neither Allaah nor his Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, ordered us to legislate, just out of our affection to the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. We have already established that the One Who legislates is Allaah and His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and that we do not legislate according to our desires and affection. If we presume that we mistreated the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, as Al-Jafri claims, then the companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, and his followers and the generation which followed them, would have mistreated him, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, as well by not celebrating his birthday; is Al-Jafri saying this as well? Moreover, we say that the nation did not deteriorate because of not celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, rather it deteriorated when people who do not know the religion of Islam with evidence grow up in this nation, like Al-Jafri and the Sufi followers who legislate for the people that which Allaah has not sent down any authority, whereas they abandon the guidance of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and that of the rightly guided caliphs, may Allaah be pleased with them.

The real mistreatment of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is accusing him of not conveying the message which Allaah conveyed to him, and this is in reality accusing him, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, of betrayal, while he is far above what they accuse him of.

Inventing something in religion, among which is celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is a clear evidence of accusing him, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. If he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, did not celebrate his birthday, and his companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, did not celebrate it, until Al-Jafri and the people before him and after him said that not celebrating his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, birthday is a mistreatment to him, then who is really mistreating him, is it he who legislates a religion which neither Allaah nor His Prophet legislated or he who followed his guidance and his path and did not innovate anything in the religion of Allaah?

If Al-Jafri has any evidence, then let him bring it forward to us and say that it is confirmed from the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, or from one of his companions, may Allaah be pleased with

them, that they celebrated his birthday, and then let us see whom amongst us is mistreating the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam.

Indeed the status of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, for the Muslims who believe in the Oneness of Allaah in this world, are those who glorify him but who do not extol him above his real status which Allaah has given him, and they are those who follow his path and guidance and teach them to others. Whatever is confirmed from him, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, we act upon it and call people to it, and whatever is not confirmed from him, we reject it, abandon it and we warn people against doing it.

Al-Jafri said: ''This celebration is for he who stood on his toes [performing the prayer] in order to save us from Hellfire, and he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is preoccupied by me and you in his grave, therefore, does he not deserve that we celebrate him, to celebrate his birthday? What is this? What is this confusion which the nation is in? What is this foolishness which affected these narrow-minded people? Where are the signs of love to the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam?''

Answer: The following points are to be made about the above statement of Al-Jafri:

The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, stood on his toes (i.e. his feet) in prayer as he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ''Shall I not be a grateful slave?'' The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, stood on his feet in order to teach his followers. No matter to what extent a slave is excellent in his worship to Allaah, he needs to humble himself to his Lord and Creator, and he should not feel secure from the plan of Allaah. The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, stood on his noble feet –and not on his toes- as Al-Jafri said, in order to be thankful and grateful to Allaah as he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, stated to 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, when she asked him about it. The nation after him is obliged to follow his guidance and example. We should not provide evidence of the above against us. What he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, did is for his own self, and what his followers do is for their own selves. Allaah Says (what means): **{And that there is not for man except that [good] for which he strives.} [Quran 53:39].**

Is Al-Jafri then saying that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, standing on his feet will benefit his followers, increasing their reward and saving them from being accounted for their deeds and the reward [whether Paradise or Hellfire]? I do not think that any person who has a sound reasoning would say this and I think that Al-Jafri is among these people who have a sound reasoning. This statement of Al-Jafri is like that of the Christians who say that 'Eesa (i.e. Jesus), may Allaah exalt his mention, was crucified in

order to save the entire humanity and that he was a sacrifice for saving it. Al-Jafri is saying ''in order to save the nation from Hellfire''; Exalted is Allaah, how dares Al-Jafri attribute the decision of making people enter Paradise or saving them from Hellfire to the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam? Yes, it is true that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, conveyed on behalf of Allaah, and he was a warner and gave glad tidings from Allaah, and whoever obeys him, he will enter Paradise, and whoever disobeys him, he will enter Hellfire. However, saying that he stood on his feet in order to save us from Hellfire, then this is very untrue, otherwise this would lead us not to perform any religious obligations ordained by Allaah because of relying on the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, standing on his feet.

Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that a Bedouin came to the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and asked him: *''Tell me about an act which if I perform it, I will be admitted to Paradise? He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, replied: ''It is to worship Allaah and not associate with him anything, and perform the five obligatory daily prayers, and pay the Zakaat (i.e. the poor due), and fast the month of Ramadhaan. Thereupon, the Bedouin said: ''I swear by Him in Whose Hands my soul is (i.e. Allaah), I will not perform any additional acts of worship but these.'' When the Bedouin left, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ''Whoever is wants to look at a man from the people of Paradise, then let him look at this man.'' [Al-Bukhaari].* These are the words of the trustworthy, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, then do Al-Jafri and his followers understand the reality of this religion?

2- Al-Jafri says: ''…he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is preoccupied by me and you in his grave.'' Allaah Says (what means):

{And We did not grant to any man before you eternity [on earth]; so if you die — would they be eternal?} [Quran 21:34].

Allaah further says (what means):

{Muhammad sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam is not but a messenger. [Other] messengers have passed on before him. So if he was to die or be killed, would you turn back on your heels [to unbelief]?} [Quran 3:144].[1]

The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and other Prophets, may Allaah exalt their mention, were mortal like all other humans except 'Eesa (i.e. Jesus), may Allaah exalt his mention, who was taken to the heavens and therefore did not yet die. As regards the narration which reads: *''The Prophets, may Allaah exalt their mention, are alive in their graves.''*; it is an authentic narration

[1] ((There is a mistake in the Arabic text as it is numbered 114)).

which proves their life in the grave and their souls with Allaah, but this does not mean that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and the prophets, may Allaah exalt their mention, before him are really alive in their grave, and they eat and drink. Rather, this is the life in the grave whose reality is not known except by Allaah, the Exalted. It is reported that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *''Among the best days of yours is Friday. It is the day on which Aadam, may Allaah exalt his mention, was created and the day on which his soul was taken away. The trumpet will be blown on this day (announcing the end of this life) and it is the day when every one will fall dead, so exalt my mention as much as you can on this day, because your exaltations are exposed to me.'' Upon hearing this, they inquired: ''How is our exaltations on you exposed to you while you are dead?" He, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, replied: "Allaah has forbidden the earth to decompose the corpse of Prophets." [Abu Dawood, An-Nasa'ee & Ibn Maajah].*

The Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, also said: ''There is absolutely no one who sends his exaltation upon me except that Allaah sends back my soul to me so that I would respond to his exaltations."

The first narration is evidence that our exaltations on him, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, are exposed to him and this is a clear evidence that his body is protected and kept untouched and not decayed, but his soul is in ‘illiyyun (with Allaah and the angels) with the souls of other Prophets, may Allaah exalt their mention. Whereas the second narration is evidence that his noble soul is connected to his body so that he would return the exaltation from his grave and from a far distance to those who exalt his mention. Therefore, his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, soul has a contact with his body, and this is an honour to him, and is attached to it so that he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, will respond to whoever exalts his mention while his soul is with Allaah. And there is no contradiction between his soul being with Allaah and his body in the earth; the essence of the souls differs from the bodies.

For instance, the soul of a sleeping person is in his body but his life is not like that of a waken person, because sleep is the like [is the brother] of death, in the same way, if the soul is returned to the body of the dead person, then he will be in a medium state between life and death exactly like the condition of a sleeping person between life and death. This is his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, condition in his grave, and this is the belief of Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jamaa'ah about the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. There is of course a big difference between this understanding and the statement of Al-Jafri ''… and he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is preoccupied by me and you…'' We do not know exactly what Al-Jafri means by his statement that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa

sallam, is preoccupied in his grave; of course if he means something different than what we explained, then this is the most refutable statement.

3- Al-Jafri describes all those who object to the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, as 'narrow minded people'. High Exalted is Allaah, how is he weighing (judging) the religious matters? The people whom Al-Jafri described as being narrow-minded are those who acted according the saying of Allaah and His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and submitted themselves to it, and did not add anything which could be judged by the mind of the people as being good to Allaah's legislation. Whereas, himself and more appropriately his followers, they are the broad-minded people [intellectuals] who legislate for themselves and for their followers anything which their mind tells them and whatever their misguided and misguiding desires tells them. What I have mentioned at the beginning of this article is enough a response to this statement as I widely clarified the issue thereof.

His statement: ''Where are the signs of love to the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam?'' We do not know what Al-Jafri means by this statement. Does he mean the contact of the soul with the soul – as this is the methodology of the unionists among the Sufis - which is a rejected sect? The real love of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is to obey him in whatever he ordered us to do and refrain from anything he prohibited us from doing, and that Allaah should only be worshiped with what He legislated.

Whoever does this, he has achieved the complete love to the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and whoever has not achieved this, he violated his love to the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. The real love is obeying him, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and following his path. Allaah Says (what means):

{Say, [O Muhammad sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam], “If you should love Allaah, then follow me, [so] Allaah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allaah is Forgiving and Merciful.”} [Quran 3:31].

Al-Jafri says: ''It is the day he was born. What is this? Is this his status?''

Answer: Al-Jafri – may Allaah guide him- is still valuating religious matters with his limited mind and his corrupt taste. It is true that the companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, strived with their life in Allaah's Cause in order to make the Word of the Oneness of Allaah the highest, but they did not sacrifice their life for the sake of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, otherwise they would have been worshipping the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam; but they are high above from doing this.

If Al-Jafri feels sorry and considers not celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, as a serious matter, then it is an obligation on him to follow the companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, in whatever they did and not exceed the limits of what they did, and not to invent an act of worship from his own mind and say that if we cannot sacrifice our own self then we should celebrate his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, birthday.

Al-Jafri said: ''It is the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, who would make a way out to my and your difficulty on that Day (i.e. the Day of Judgement), he is our succour in this worldly life, in the life in the grave, and in the Hereafter, then after all this, would we doubt about rejoicing or not rejoicing him [on his birthday]?''

There are two points to be made about this statement:
1- It is confirmed that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, will intercede for his nation on the Day of Judgement, and there are many kinds of intercessions, but this intercession is conditioned upon two conditions: 1- Allaah's Permission for the intercessor. 2- The Pleasure of Allaah about the person who is to be interceded for. Allaah Says (what means):

{Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission?} [Quran 2: 255]

Therefore, no one can intercede in principle (for anyone else) unless Allaah gives him permission to intercede. Allaah Says (what means): **{…and they cannot intercede except on behalf of one whom He approves.} [Quran 21:28].**

This means that no one will intercede for a person unless Allaah is pleased with the actions and statements of the latter. This can only be to the people who follow the Sunnah of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and not those who innovate in religion. Whoever changes, alters, and adds to the Religion of Allaah and legislates that which neither Allaah nor His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, legislated, like whoever innovates the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, without any evidence, then he will be prevented from his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, intercession.

A narration reads: ''You do not know what they have invented after you. '' Therefore, they would be repelled from his Hawdh (i.e. basin). So, is he who innovates in the religion of Allaah, o Jafri, and added an act of worship which neither Allaah nor His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, permitted, and he claimed a knowledge which neither the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, nor his companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, who came after him knew, will he then be covered by his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, intercession?[1]

[1] The Arabic text [page 14] reads as follows:

2- Al-Jafri says: ''He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is our succour in this worldly life, in our life in the grave and on the Day of Judgement.''

Answer: If Al-Jafri meant the things which the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, was able to do in his life, then there is no objection to this. As regards after his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, death, then the answer is 'no', because it is established that the Prophet Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, died like all humans die, therefore, we are not allowed to seek his help. However, if he meant seeking his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, intercession in this worldly life, like saying ''with the right of Your Prophet'', and thus swearing by Allaah with one of his creatures, then there are two prohibitions in this:
He swore with other than Allaah.

Believing that there is someone who has a right on Allaah. Both cases are rejected, and a poet spoke eloquently as he said: ''The creatures do not have a right with Allaah is obliged to do for them, o no, but any endeavor is not lost in His Regard;

If they [creatures] are punished, then this is by His Justice, and if they are made to enjoy (from His Pleasures in Paradise) then this is due to His Favour, and He is the Most Generous, the All-Encompassing.''

As regards his statement ''in the life in the grave'', then according to his [Al-Jarri's] wrong belief, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, responds to the supplication of a person who calls upon him and that he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, repels harm besides Allaah, and that we seek his help after his death….etc, then this is very rejected, as Allaah instructed us when asking for provisions to ask Him Alone, Allaah Says (what means):

{[Remember] when you asked help of your Lord, and He answered you.} [Quran 8:9][1]

Allaah also says (what means):

{While they call to Allah for help [and to their son]} [Quran 46:17]. As regards the saying of Allaah (which means):

{And the one from his faction called for help to him against the one from his enemy.} [Quran 28:15];

Then this help is in what a person is able to do, but concerning what only Allaah is able to do, it is not permissible for a person to ask for help from someone else. With regard to asking for help from the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, after his death, then this

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وادعى علما يعلمه الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم ولا صحابته من بعده
Whereas it should read as follows: وادعى علما لم يعلمه الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم ولا صحابته من بعده and there is a big difference between the two meanings.

[1] ((verse 9 and not 17 as in the Arabic text)).

is forbidden, as the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is not able to help anyone after his death. Concerning the statement of Al-Jafri: ''…and on the Day of Judgement'' then the answer has already been given in the first point and there is no need to repeat it again here.

Al-Jafri said: ''What takes place during the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam? Everything that takes place are confirmed acts [Sunnan- plural of Sunnah], the birthday is reciting the Quran and exalting the mention of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam; does this need evidence from the Quran? Does Allaah say (what means): **{O you who have believed, each one of you should ask, individually and in a silent voice, [Allaah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allaah to grant him] peace}, rather Allaah Says (what means): {O you who have believed ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace.} [Quran 33:56]**

and here it is the plural form which is used in the verse [in Arabic] for a congregation, and in principle exalting the mention of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, should be in congregation, and exaltations necessitate such a thing. Then a stupid person would say it is not permissible to exalt his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, mention except with the heart (i.e. silently).

These are principles which are open for us in order to get closer to Allaah, so why should we close them with these statements (of such people)?''

Answer: This statement necessitates us to clarify some points in order to demonstrate that it is rejected. His statement: ''…, everything that takes place are confirmed acts…'' is wrong, rather what happens in it are innovations and I have already responded to this at the first part of his statement when he mentioned that celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is a confirmed act, so there is no need to repeat this again. As regards his statement ''… reciting the Quran and exalting the mention of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam,…then our answer is that reciting the Quran is something permissible at all times and it is the best way of mentioning Allaah, and doing this on the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, at a specified time is an innovation in religion. Whoever intends by reciting the Quran to celebrate his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, birthday, believing that this is desirable, then this act includes the meaning of innovating by taking this act as a habit which comes at particular times, and this is disliked as this comprehends changing the legislation and resembling what is not legislated [permitted in religion] with something which is legislated [permissible]. The same thing applies to exalting the mention of the Prophet, sallallaahu

'alayhi wa sallam, as doing so is not restricted to his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, birthday, rather this is general.[1] Rather, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, confirmed exalting him at some occasions but he did not mention his birthday, which is an unfounded claim and an innovation in religion. Among these legislated times [for his mention] is Friday, as in the narration which reads: ''Among the best days of yours is Friday.'' ... until he said ''so exalt my mention as much as you can on this day,...'' One may also exalt his mention at all times as in the narration which reads: ''Whoever asks Allaah to exalt my mention one time, Allaah will exalt his mention ten times.'' [Muslim]; and after hearing the Muaththin (i.e. the person calling the Athaan –call for the prayer) as he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ''When you hear the Muaththin, say exactly what he says, and then ask Allaah to exalt my mention as whoever exalts my mention one time, Allaah will exalt his mention ten times.''; and at the second part of Tashahhud during the prayer, and during the Friday speech [both the first and second speech], in 'Eed days, in the funeral prayer, when supplicating, when entering the mosque, when coming out of the mosque, and when his name is mentioned. The narrations which were reported in this regard are the best evidence for whoever Allaah guided and wanted good for him, but there is absolutely no narration, not even one weak narration, that he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, specified his exaltation to be on his innovated birthday. Would then Al-Jafri, his followers and those who came before him, really understand the religion of Allaah and would not say about Allaah that which they do not know? I ask Allaah to guide their hearts to His Religion and to the Sunnah of His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, Aameen (Amen).

As regards the saying of Allaah (which means):

{O you who have believed ask [Allaah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allaah to grant him] peace.} [Quran 33:56]

Which Al-Jafri provided as evidence proving the permissibility of exalting the mention of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, in congregation and in a loud voice, then this is wrong and rejected, for the following reasons:

1- The verse did not indicate the generality of what Al-Jafri pointed to in exalting the mention of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, in a way which was taught by him, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, to his companions, may Allaah be pleased with them.

2- On one hand, the meaning of asking Allaah to exalt the mention of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, means supplicating for him, and a supplication is an act of worship which should be said silently and not loudly, as Allaah Says (what means):

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[1] In the Arabic text it is written بلهو [page 16] where as it should read بل هو

{Call upon your Lord in humility and privately.} [Quran 7: 55]. Exalting the mention of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, comes under this meaning. On the other hand, supplicating in congregation and in one voice is an innovation about which no text is reported.

3- It is not reported that any trustworthy interpreter of the Quran interpreted this verse in the same way Al-Jafri did, therefore his statement [interpretation] is an innovation which has no evidence from the Quran or the Sunnah of the of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, or from the statements of the scholars of the Salaf (righteous predecessors), may Allaah have mercy upon them. Al-Jafri says: ''... These are principles which are open for us in order to get closer to Allaah...''; the question to be asked here is: what are these principles? Are they from the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam? Who opened them, is it Allaah or His Prophet, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam? Who closed them at the first place so that they would be opened? I am very surprised and amazed indeed for a man like Al-Jafri to say that which he does not know! Allaah Says (what means): {Or have they partners [i.e. other deities] who have ordained for them a religion to which Allaah has not consented?} [Quran 42:21. The verse means that any person who does something in order to get closer to Allaah (by doing it), or that he made this as an obligation by his words or action, without it being legislated by Allaah, then he has indeed legislated in religion that which Allaah did not permit, and whoever follows him in that, he has taken him as a partner with Allaah, as he legislated for him that which was not permitted by Allaah. Therefore, is the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, which Al-Jafri is calling to a principle among the principles of religion? We ask him to bring as an evidence from the Quran or the authentic Sunnah which is confirmed from the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam; anything other than this is nonsense, and anything which is based on falsehood is falsehood.

Al-Jafri said: ''Also, we exalt his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, mention at birthdays, and after exalting his mention, comes his biography...''
Answer: 1- Exalting the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is permissible at all times and there is no doubt about this, but specifying it to his birthday is a rejected innovation. This has already been discussed.

2- The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, did not order his nation to celebrate his birthday, and he did not order them to mention his birthday, his virtues, his miracles, his biography, and his noble traits especially on the night of his birthday, rather doing so is

an innovation which is invented around 600 years after his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, death.

3- Knowing his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, birthday, his virtues, his miracles, his biography, and his noble traits are available for whoever wants to read and know them at any time, and this is not restricted to a particular time and on a socially innovated manner; whoever does this is following the way of Sultan Irbil who innovated the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, which is taken as a festival which they celebrate every year.

4- Following the example of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and imitating him, can only be achieved by following him and holding fast to his Sunnah, and putting his guidance in priority over the guidance of anyone else. Furthermore, Islam is based on two great principles: A- To worship Allaah Alone without associating with Him any partners. B- To worship Allaah with what he legislated on the tongue of His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. Therefore, we do not worship him according to our desires and with innovations. Allaah Says (what means):

{Then We put you, [O Muhammad sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam], on an ordained way concerning the matter [of religion]; so follow it and do not follow the inclinations of those who do not know. Indeed, they will never avail you against Allaah at all.} [Quran 45:18-19].

Therefore, one may only worship Allaah with the obligations and desirable acts which the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, had legislated, but one should not worship Him with innovated matters.

Al-Jafri said: ''What happens during the celebration of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is praising him. When he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ''Never extol me as the Christians did extol 'Eesa (Jesus Christ, may Allaah exalt his mention) the Son of Mary…'', this means do not value and understand things in the way they do, as they said: ''the Messiah is the son of Allaah'', ''(He is) three in One'', ''the Messiah is Allaah'', but there is nothing if we praise him, and the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, permitted this, who gave Ka'b Ibn Zubayr, may Allaah be pleased with him, the garment? Is it not the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, when Ka'b, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: ''Indeed, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is a light which enlightens (people paths), and a sharp and unsheathed sword of Allaah. Thereupon, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, threw the garment.''

Answer: There is no objection to praising the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, with things which are peculiar to him, as he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said to the person who told him: *''You are our Sayyid (i.e. Master)'', and he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa*

sallam, replied: ''As-Sayyid (the Master) is Allaah.'' We said: ''You are the best of us in excellence, and the most powerful of us.'' He replied: ''Say whatever you want, but do not gradually follow the steps of the devil.'' [Ahmad and Abu Daawood].

However, we do object Al-Jafri's interpretation of the narration of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, as he brought this meaning from himself in order to find a way out to what he and his followers are doing when celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. The meaning of the saying of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, ''Never extol me…'', extolling is exceeding the limits in praising and lying when praising, so one should not exceed the limits in praising him as the Christians exceeded the limits when extolling 'Eesa (Jesus Christ) may Allaah exalt his mention), as they claimed that he is God (Allaah), rather the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, should be described as a slave as Allaah described him, so we should say: ''His Slave and Messenger.''

However, those who celebrate the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, object to call him by this name [Slave and Messenger], and they violated his prohibition, so the meaning of extolling him appeared in their poetry, prose and books, to the extent that they are of the view that it is permissible to seek the help of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, in all their matters and attributed to him the knowledge of the unseen which only Allaah knows. The statement of Al-Busayri is clear evidence about this as he said about the garment of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam:
''O most honourable person, to whom should I turn when calamities and difficulties befall me?''; and this is a clear Shirk [associating partners to Allaah]. He also said: ''If on the Day of Resurrection, he is not taking me by my hand out of his favour, then my feet would surely slip (fall into Hellfire).''
He further said: ''Among the signs of your generosity is the entire world and whatever it contains, and among your knowledge is the knowledge of the Preserved Book and the Pen.'' This is also a clear Shirk.

On the other hand, Al-Bur'i also said: ''O Prophet of Allaah! O owner of excellence, O happiness (grace) on the day of Resurrection both in respect of high rank and status, grant Abdulurraheem Al-Multaji with the protection of your glory, o helper of the orphans, and minimise my faults, o my Sayyid (i.e. Master), in committing sins for fifty years.''

This is a clear Shirk as well, and there are other things which are a clear deviation from the Islamic Law in praising the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and this is the most aberrant Shirk.

Will Al-Jafri then stop his treachery and misconceiving the Muslims in providing texts to prove his falsehood for the permissibility of praising the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, with these texts?

The reality of what Al-Jafri intends in praising the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is similar to what Al-Busayri and Al-Bur'i said and their like, would then a Muslim say that this is Tawheed [Oneness of Allaah]. Nay, not at all!

As regards the praising of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, by Ka'b Ibn Zuhayr and Hassaan Ibn Thaabit, may Allaah be pleased with them, and other poets of Tawheed, then there is nothing wrong about them. It is the one who associates partners to Allaah and calls other people to it, who is wrong and atrocious.

To conclude, the devil showed to the celebrators of the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, this praise which involves associating partners to Allaah in the form of loving and glorifying the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and showed to them the true Tawheed in the form of undermining this Tawheed. Indeed what Allaah and His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, intended in a point of view of knowledge and action, is totally contrary to what the people who celebrate the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, intended as they contravened what Allaah and His the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, prohibited.

Al-Jafri, said: ''Al-Haafidh mentioned in the book 'Manhul Madh' 119 companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, who praised the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, among whom was his [the Prophet's] uncle Al-'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, as he compiled a poet on the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, which comprised ten lines among which is the following: ''When you were born, the earth shined and was full of light.''

Answer: It is acceptable to praise the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, with things which are among his characteristics, and there is no objection about this. However, we do object describing him with attributes that are only befitting Allaah. I have already answered this issue and there is no need to repeat it again here.

The praising of the Prophet's, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, birthday by Al-'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, to which Al-Jafri referred to, like 'the earth being shined and full of light', does not mean that it is permissible to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet', sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and this is not evidence about its permissibility.

Al-Jafri further said: ''When the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, came back from a battle, a slave girl came and told him: ''I vowed to play the Duff (tambourine) on your head if you came back safely.'' And when is it an obligation to fulfil the vow? Is it when it is a sin (an act of disobedience), or when it is disliked, or when it is permissible? It is not an obligation to fulfil the vow unless it is permissible. Here, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ''You should fulfil your vow.'' Although playing the Duff is permissible, but when it is combined with rejoicing for the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, then it became an obligation to fulfil it.''

Answer: According to the view of the majority of the scholars, may Allaah have mercy upon them, it is disliked to make a vow, and the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, discouraged us from vowing as he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ''It [the vow] does not bring any good, it only extracts something from a mean person.'' However, if a Muslim makes a vow, he is obliged to fulfil it unless it is a sin, as the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ''Whoever vows to obey Allaah, he should obey him, and whoever vows to disobey Him, he should not disobey him.''[1]

Therefore, if the vow is free from any prohibition, and it is within Allaah's obedience, then it is an obligation to fulfil it, and whoever does it, is praised as Allaah Says (what means):

{They [are those who] fulfill [their] vows and fear a Day whose evil will be widespread.} [Quran 76:7].

However, the story of the slave girl which Al-Jafri provided as evidence for the permissibility of playing the Duff at the first palce, and then considering it as a confirmed obligation due to it being combined with rejoicing the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, then this argumentation is rejected for the following reasons:

Some scholars, may Allaah have mercy upon them, spoke about this story that it is not authentic and they classified it as weak because its chain of narrators is not authentic.

The issue of the authenticity of the narration: the narration which Al-Jafri provided as evidence includes: ''...and then 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, entered and she threw the Duff under her and sat on it.

Thereupon the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ''Indeed the devil fears you, o 'Umar, I was sitting while she was playing the Duff, and Abu Bakr entered and she did not stop, and

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[1] The word نذر is missing in the Arabic text [page 20], as it should read:
يطيع الله فليطعه ومن نذر أن يعصيه فلا يعصه من نذرأن

then 'Ali entered, and she did not stop playing, and then 'Uthmaan entered, and she did not stop, but when you entered, o 'Umar, she threw the Duff.'' [Abu Daawood]. The scholars, may Allaah have mercy upon them, differed in opinion about this narration, some of them permitted it [the Duff] and some of them prohibited it. Those who prohibited the use of the Duff make this as an exception from the general evidence which proves its permissibility, and they say that the use of the Duff is permitted in some cases among which is: a) In marriage, this is like announcing the marriage and not enjoying oneself by listening to it, b) In 'Eed festivals, and it is played by slave girls but without any female singers, c) When coming back from a long absence which is a matter of discussion here.

It is also said that in the narration reported by At-Tirmithi, may Allaah have mercy upon him, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, told her: ''If you vowed to play the Duff, then do so, otherwise no.'' Hence, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, conditioned the playing of the Duff on the vow, but the people who celebrate the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, always play with the Duff. We have not heard that all those who celebrate the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, fulfil their vow of playing the Duff at his birthday. We notice that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, disliked playing the Duff as he said: *''Otherwise no.''*; meaning do not play the Duff, so where are those who celebrate his birthday from this? It is also said that playing the Duff is something permissible upon which a text is reported, so it is something which is permitted in Islamic Law.

Whereas the people who celebrate the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, they worship Allaah by playing the Duff and they do this in order to get closer to Allaah. In principle, the acts of worship are Tawqifiyah (which means revealed by text –from the Quran or the Sunnah of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and all things are permissible in principle unless there is a text which proves that they are forbidden; playing the Duff falls under this category.

Then Al-Jafri attacked the contemporary Imaams as he said: ''Today they object to us about this matter while there are prohibitions in the nation which no one denies. The people made a big deal about the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, whereas they kept silent on Riba (interest and usury).''

Answer: What Al-Jafri claims is wrong. The scholars, may Allaah have mercy upon them, who are known to be trustworthy, religious, knowledgeable in religion, and righteous, among the Muslims, issued Fataawa (i.e. religious rulings), edited tapes and books whereby they clearly declared that Riba is forbidden, and

clarified to the nation that Riba is prohibited and that it is a grave major sin, and that whoever indulges in it, he is declaring a war against Allaah…If Al-Jafri has not heard about this, then it is his own problem and it is not permissible for him to generalize this on all the nation. It is not permissible for a person, whoever he is, to ignore a matter which the entire Muslims know and then claim that other Muslims do not know it.

Al-Jafri said: ''Among what takes place in the celebration of the birthday also is supplicating, and standing in rejoice for the best of mankind, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and An-Nawawi, may Allaah have mercy upon him, confirmed the authenticity of standing for the noble people, whereas people say that what we are doing is an innovation because the companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, did not do this act: we say that the companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, did not organize a graduation ceremony for the people who memorized the Quran, and they did not celebrate such celebrations, and they did not have Islamic universities as well.''

Answer: I will answer the statement of Al-Jafri in the following points:
His statement: ''What takes place in the celebration of the birthday is supplicating'' : to specify the supplications for the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, is an innovation as Allaah permitted His Slaves to supplicate at all times but He did not restrict the supplication to a specific period of time. Allaah Says (what means):

{And your Lord says, ''Call upon Me; I will respond to you.''} [Quran 40:60].

Allaah also Says (what means):

{Call upon your Lord in humility and privately.} [Quran 7:55].

There are other verses as well which prove that supplicating to Allaah is general at all times.

His statement: ''to stand in rejoice for the best of mankind, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam,'' and this is an innovation in religion as the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: '' …the worst matters are the newly invented ones (in religion), and every newly invented matter is a misguidance…''. The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, also said: *"Whoever introduces an act that is not in accordance with ours (concerning religion), it will be rejected."* In addition to this, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, prohibited us from standing to welcome him and informed us that this is the practice of the non-Arabs. Abu Umaamah Al-Baahili, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: *''The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, entered upon us while he was leaning on his stick, and we stood (as a sign of respect) to welcome him, thereupon he,*

sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: ''Do not stand as the non-Arabs do, because they glorify one another.''

Furthermore, Anas, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: *''There is no person who is most beloved to them than the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, but when they saw him they did not stand (to welcome him) as they knew that he disliked them doing so.''* Since the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, disliked that people would stand for him and discouraged them from doing so, and informed us that it is the non-Arabs who do so, so what about standing when mentioning his, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, birthday and his death. Therefore, standing to rejoice his birthday is more appropriate to be prohibited because it combines two things: an innovation and an imitation to the non-Arabs.

Providing the statement of An-Nawawi, may Allaah have mercy upon him, in the issue of standing and stated that he [An-Nawawi] confirmed the authenticity of standing for the noble people: Answer: There is no evidence about the distinction which An-Nawawi, may Allaah have mercy upon him, made between standing for the noble people and standing for other people. The narration by Abu Umaamah and Anas, may Allaah be pleased with them, is a great response for those who provided this distinction. Ishaaq Ibn Ibraaheem, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: ''Ahmad Ibn Hanbal entered upon some people in the mosque and they stood for him, thereupon he said to them: ''Do not stand for anyone as this is disliked.'' Moreover, Maalik, may Allaah have mercy upon him, was asked: ''Is it permissible for a man to stand for another man who is of a noble status and is knowledgeable? He replied: ’I dislike that but it is permissible to spread in his sitting.'' As regards the saying of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam: ''Stand for your Sayyid (meaning Master).''; i.e. Sa'd Ibn Mu'aadh, may Allaah be pleased with him, when he came to rule on Beni Quraydhah (i.e. the Jews), he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, ordered them to do this to descend him from the donkey as he was sick due to the injury he had on the battle of Khunduq.

What proves this is the narration by Abu Sa'eed, may Allaah be pleased with him, who said: ''When he [Sa'd] arrived to the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, the latter said: ''Stand to your Sayyid and descend him (from his donkey). Then 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: ''Our Sayyid is Allaah, the Exalted.'' Then they descended him.

Therefore, the above narrations are a clear evidence against stating the story of Sa'd, may Allaah be pleased with him, as evidence for the permissibility of standing (for noble people) which is a controversial issue.

Al-Jafri says: ''...the companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, did not organize a graduation ceremony for the people who memorized the Quran,...and they did not have Islamic universities as well.'' Answer: The statement of Al-Jafri is a response to those who do that among the Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah who follow the guidance of the Salaf (righteous predecessors) among the companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, and the generation which followed them and those who followed them exactly in faith until the Day of Judgment.

Organizing a graduation ceremony for the people who memorized the Quran is done in order to encourage those who are in the process of memorizing the Quran to memorize it in its totality, and there is nothing wrong about this, because it is not connected to a forbidden matter, or innovation in a particular place, so it is among the permissible things which Allaah has permitted. Moreover, what happens in the festival of memorizing the Quran is completely different to the innovations which take place when celebrating the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and I have already clarified some of these points.

As regards the existence of Islamic universities, then this is not an innovation as they are established for teaching the people, and the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, used to teach his companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, in the mosque. The existence of schools and universities are for the organization of the education and teaching process and the students graduate after education in different specialties in order to do different jobs each in his own speciality, and it is impossible for a person who has a sound reasoning to say that establishing universities is an innovation in religion.

Then Al-Jafri provided as evidence the story that the people who celebrate the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, are the callers to Allaah, and the summary of this story is as follows: ''A missionary organization offered food and drink to some Muslims in an Indonesian town and, as a result, they apostated and became Christians. When the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, came, they took the Duff and started to praise the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. Therefore, the missionaries threatened them to stop otherwise they would stop giving them food and drink. They refused and embraced Islam.

Answer: Subhaanah Allaah [expression said to express surprise and astonishment, it means Exalted is He], is such an incident an evidence that those who celebrate the birthday of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, are the callers to Allaah? Where is (what is the position of) the knowledge? Where are the Quran and its Tafseer (i.e. interpretation) and the people who

memorize it and act upon it? Where are the Prophetic narrations and their narrators? Where is the Da'wah (i.e. calling people to Allaah) to Allaah with the knowledge inherited from the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam?...Al-Jafri has no consideration for all this, rather, Al-Jafri take into consideration playing the Duff and praising the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, with something which the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, himself declares free from.

Would it be said then, o Al-Jafri, that any person who plays well the Duff and learns some poems in praising the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, which involve associating partners to Allaah, be a person who calls people to Allaah? I don't think so -even Al-Jafri- would reply by 'yes', unless a person is one of the three [which were mentioned in the Prophetic narration that a pen is lifted from writing their deeds, and he, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, mentioned] an insane person until he regains consciousness. Will then Al-Jafri and his followers who follow these innovations and prohibitions regain consciousness from speaking on behalf of Allaah without knowledge?

Finally we pray to Allaah to show us the truth as the truth and bless us by following it, and show us falsehood as falsehood and bless us by avoiding it and staying away from it, and we pray to Allaah not to make the truth ambiguous to us lest we would go astray.

May Allaah exalt the mention of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, as well as that of his family and all his companions, and whoever treads his path and follows his Sunnah until the Day of Judgment.

All perfect praise be to Allaah.